decision of Government on TRAI's recommendations in Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) and the matter is *sub-judice*.

Rules regarding Electromagnetic Radiation

†434. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Electromagnetic Radiation (EMR) always continue from mobile phone towers;

(b) if so, the effects of EMR on human body;

(c) the rules regarding setting up of mobile phone towers;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the time by when rules will be framed in this direction; and

(f) whether Government will arrange for strict monitoring till the rules are framed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (f) Yes, Sir. The electromagnetic radiations are always present from any antenna emitting radio signals, whether it is a mobile phone tower or a broadcast tower etc. The level of electromagnetic radiations within safety limits is harmless.The latest Fact Sheet of World Health Organisation (WHO) (No. 304 of May, 2006) states that from all evidence accumulation so far, no adverse short or long-term health effects have been shown to occur from the RF signals produced by base station. Since wireless networks produce generally lower RF signals than base stations, no adverse health effects are expected exposure to them. Further , a Committee was setup under the Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), as per the orders of Hon'ble High Court, Mumbai, to study the effects of radiations from mobile phone towers and related aspects. The Committee had studied the effects and concluded that overall there is not enough evidence to show direct health hazards of RF exposures from mobile base stations.

Rural mobile telecom subscribers

435. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECNNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have set a traget to achieve 150 million rural subscribers by 2010 from the current level of 30 million mobile telecom connectivity in rural India and to provide by December, 2007 educational institutes, police stations, and public health centres in 1000,000 out of 600,000 villages broad band interent services;

(b) whether Government are also focusing on the requirement of North-Eastern States; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Government have set a target to achieve 80 million rural subscribers by 2010. Department of Information Technology has embarked upon a programme of setting up 100,000 Community Service Centres (CSCs) to cater to e-governance requirements of 600,000 villages in the country in a phased manner.

(b) and (c) Government have launched a scheme, through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), for provision of support for setting up and managing 631 infrastructure sites spread over 70 districts in North-Eastern States for providing mobile services including other Wireless Access Services (WAS) in the specified rural and remote, areas, where there is no exisiting fixed wireless or mobile coverage. The Government has also approved a scheme for providing support for establishing 100,000 Broadband, Internet enabled, Common Services Centres (CSCs) in rural areas of the country including that of North-Eastern States. Department of Information Technology will implement the scheme in a public private partnership mode. The support for the North-East for this scheme has been pegged at 75% of the normative value as against national value of 33%.

Auction of spectrum

436. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Department of Telecommunications have written to Prime Minister on the issue of auction of spectrum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some foreign firms including Rookie Telecom and S. Tel have offered voluntarily to pay Rs. 6000 crore to DoT for allocation of spectrum;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) the reasons that Government do not want to auction spectrum to telecom operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Communications have been sent to Prime Minister on issues related to licencing and allocation of spectrum aspects which includes, among others, licensing procedures, enhancement of subscribers linked spectrum allocation criteria, spectrum charges, use of dual technology by telecom service providers etc.

(c) and (d) M/s S. Tel Ltd., in their letter, have stated, among others, that "S Tel is of the view that the policy that was evolved when the industry was at its infancy, will not serve the public purpose now, when the industry is among the most advanced. Consistent with its knowledge and understanding of the business of telecom and the high value of spectrum, S. Tel comes forward voluntarily to pay additional revenue share to the extent of Rs. 6000 crores to the DoT, over the above the spectrum charges revenue share payable as per the existing policy, over a period of 10 years from the date of the spectrum allotment. This will bring into effect a prioritization model, which will fully subserve the larger public interest."